

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 9660

LIMDIS

DEPT PASS WHITE HOUSE FOR DR. BRZEZINSKI

DOD FOR SECRETARY BROWN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, IT, PINT
SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH MOD RUFFINI

1. I MET WITH MINISTER OF DEFENSE RUFFINI ON MAY 24 FOR A
GENERAL DISCUSSION, AND BEGAN BY EXPRESSING OUR APPRECIATION
FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY AND SUCCESSFUL EFFORT HE MADE TO BRING
ITALY INTO THE AWACS PROGRAM AND THE REMARKABLE WORK DONE IN
HIS MINISTRY TO REMOVE ITALIAN RESERVATIONS TO THE LTDP.
RUFFINI ADMITTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN A GREAT DEAL OF WORK
INVOLVED IN GETTING ITALY ABOARD ON BOTH PROGRAMS BUT HE
BELIEVED IT HAD BEEN ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL "ESPECIALLY IN THESE
DIFFICULT TIMES" TO DEMONSTRATE ITALIAN SOLIDARITY WITH THE
ALLIANCE AND TO CONFRONT THE GOI'S DOMESTIC ADVERSARIES WITH
"DEEDS NOT WORDS". THESE WOULD BE A PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON
AWACS AFTER THE WASHINGTON SUMMIT. CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES
DEFENSE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN ACCAME HAD ALREADY CALLED TO HIM
TO APPEAR. RUFFINI ASSERTED HE WAS NOT THE LEAST CONCERNED
ABOUT THE OUTCOME AND HAD TOLD ACCAME THAT HE WAS PREPARED
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TO COME IMMEDIATELY IF NECESSARY.

2. COMMENT: RUFFINI WAS OBVIOUSLY PLEASED THAT HIS
PERSONAL EXERTIONS WERE RECOGNIZED, AND I URGE THAT HIS
AMERICAN INTERLOCUTORS AT THE WASHINGTON SUMMIT MAKE
HIM AWARE THAT THE U.S. IS GRATEFUL FOR HIS EFFORTS AND
UNDERSTANDS HOW DIFFICULT WERE THE OBSTACLES HE HAD TO

OVERCOME. I DO NOT BELIEVE IT WOULD BE PRODUCTIVE TO PUT PRESSURE ON RUFFINI ON OTHER ISSUES DURING HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON. END COMMENT.

3. THE REMAINDER OF OUR CONVERSATION WAS DEVOTED TO THE ITALIAN DOMESTIC SITUATION. RUFFINI WAS ENTIRELY CANDID IN HIS ASSESSMENTS, SOME OF WHICH WERE PERHAPS HIGHLY PERSONAL, BUT ALL OF WHICH MADE FASCINATING--AND INSTRUCTIVE--LISTENING. FOLLOWING ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS.

4. HE HAD NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE PCI. WHEN THE DAY CAME THAT IT WAS ENTIRELY DIVORCED FROM THE USSR IT WOULD NO LONGER BE A COMMUNIST PARTY...EVEN THEN, HOWEVER, HE WOULD FEEL DIFFIDENT ABOUT ACCEPTING ITS CLAIMS.

5. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION, HE ASSERTED THAT THE PCI DOES NOT HAVE GREAT INFLUENCE ON THE DECISIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT. "THE ITALIAN SITUATION IS ON A RAZOR'S EDGE." THERE IS SOME AMBIGUITY. BUT THE DC'S CLEAR OBJECTIVE IS TO RECREATE CONDITIONS TO RECONSTRUCT A CLEAR MAJORITY AND A VIABLE OPPOSITION. THE PRESENT SITUATION IS CERTAINLY DIFFICULT BUT IT IS TRANSITORY. IN FACT THE PCI IS IN A VERY UNCOMFORTABLE POSITION ELECTORALLY. AS MEMBER OF THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY IT CANNOT ATTACK THE GOVERNMENT. BUT IT STILL HAS TO SHOW ITS VOTERS THAT IT TAKES PART IN THE FUNDAMENTAL DECISIONS OF THE GOVERN-
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MENT. THE DC, SAID RUFFINI, IS ONLY GIVING THEM "TUTTO FUMO E NIENTE ARROSTO" (ALL SMOKE AND NO ROAST). FOR EXAMPLE, RECENT KEY APPOINTMENTS SUCH AS SANTOVITO (NEW HEAD OF SISMI), GRASSINI (DIRECTOR SISDE), CORSINI (COM-MANDING GENERAL OF THE CARABINIERI), GENERAL MOIZO (NEW SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE MOD) WERE MADE ENTIRELY WITHOUT REFERENCE TO THE PCI. INDEED THE PCI RECOGNIZES EACH OF THEM AS DEDICATED ATLANTICISTS, PRO-AMERICAN AND ANTI-COMMUNIST. ("THE PCI WOULD EAT THEM RAW, IF IT COULD.") AT THE DPC THE GOVERNMENT "FOLLOWED ITS OWN ROAD" AS IT WILL AT THE SUMMIT. THE PCI HAS OF COURSE BEEN GIVEN SOME SECONDARY APPOINTMENTS IN NON-VITAL PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS, BUT "UP TO NOW" AT LEAST IT HAS NO REAL INFLUENCE ON MAJOR GOVERNMENT DECISIONS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 9660

LIMDIS

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6. THE RECENT ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTIONS HAVE GIVEN "SOME SPACE" TO THE PSI. THE DC HOPES THAT THE PSI CAN PULL ITSELF TOGETHER, CONSOLIDATE ITS WEST EUROPEAN ORIENTATION. RUFFINI THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT THAT WE HAVE CONTINUING CONTACTS WITH THE PSI TO HELP REINFORCE THAT CONSOLIDATION. CLAUDIO SIGNORILE (VICE SECRETARY OF THE PSI) WAS "THE POINT OF BALANCE" IN THE PSI AND A KEY MAN IN THE PROCESS OF RATIONALIZING THE PARTY. HE HAD COME OUT OF THE FAR LEFT OF THE PARTY AND WAS ALREADY OCCUPYING A MORE MODERATE POSITION. THE EMBASSY WOULD DO WELL TO HAVE A GOOD DEAL TO DO WITH HIM. I ASSURED RUFFINI THAT I AND MY STAFF WERE PAYING A GOOD DEAL OF ATTENTION TO THE PSI. ONLY A FEW DAYS AGO I HAD A VERY PRODUCTIVE MEETING WITH CRAXI. AND MORE RECENTLY I HAD A MEETING WITH LELIO LAGORIO, THE IMPRESSIVE PRESIDENT OF THE REGION OF TUSCANY.

7. RUFFINI REMARKED THAT THE DC WAS A "STRANGE PARTY." IT WAS HARD TO FIND A VALID INTERLOCUTOR IN THE PARTY WHO WAS CAPABLE OF PROVIDING A SYNTHESIS OF THE PARTY'S POSITION.
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TION. PARTY SECRETARY ZACCAGNINI IS A VERY HUMAN PERSON BUT HAS NO POLITICAL STATURE OR ABILITY. PICCOLI AND BARTOLOMEI (PARTY WHIPS IN PARLIAMENT) WERE PERSONS WORTH TALKING TO. BUT GRANELLI (HEAD OF DC FOREIGN AFFAIRS SECTION) WAS A MAN WITH NO INFLUENCE WHATSOEVER IN THE PARTY AND "THE LESS THE EMBASSY SAW HIM THE BETTER." GRANELLI SURVIVES ONLY BECAUSE ZACCAGNINI IS HIS GOOD FRIEND.

ZACCAGNINI IS A "GOOD" MAN BUT HAS SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH PEOPLE LIKE GRANELLI WHO ARE USELESS. THE DC FINDS ZACCAGNINI USEFUL BECAUSE HE PROJECTS AN IMAGE OF INCORRUPTIBILITY, BUT IN FACT IT IS LIKE NOT HAVING A SECRETARY OF THE PARTY. RUFFINI RECOUNTED THAT WHEN HE WAS VICE SECRETARY OF THE DC UNDER ZACCAGNINI, "EVERY DAY WAS A DRAMA." ZACCAGNINI COULD NOT FACE THE PROBLEMS THAT CAME UP AND SIMPLY TOLD RUFFINI "YOU TAKE CARE OF IT." DURING THE TRYING DAYS OF THE MORO KIDNAPPING ZACCAGNINI WENT TO PIECES.

8. I ASKED RUFFINI HOW HE SAW THE ELECTION OF A NEW PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC, WHETHER ZACCAGNINI WAS A POSSIBLE CANDIDATE. THE PROBLEM OF A SUCCESSOR PRESIDENT WAS SIMPLER NOW, RUFFINI SUGGESTED. IT WOULD CERTAINLY BE SOMEONE FROM THE DC. AND THERE WERE REALLY ONLY THREE CANDIDATES. ZACCAGNINI WAS ONE OF THEM, THE OTHERS WERE FANFANI AND ANDREOTTI. FANFANI'S CHANCES, HE THOUGHT, WERE SLIMMEST. HE IS NOT LIKED AND HAS A DIFFICULT TEMPERAMENT. IN A WAY HE IS "TOO INTELLIGENT AND UNPREDICTABLE." ZACCAGNINI IS THE WEAKEST OF THE THREE AND UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE STRANGE PEOPLE AROUND HIM. HE IS NOT A POLITICIAN. ANDREOTTI IS A CYNIC, COLD AND DISCIPLINED. "ALL BRAIN AND NO BLOOD." HE IS A MAN INCAPABLE OF JOY OR ANGER ANDREOTTI IS NOT A LONG-TERM PLANNER, RUFFINI SAID. HE IS A MAN WHO DEALS WITH ISSUES AS THEY COME.

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"TODAY'S PROBLEMS TODAY, TOMORROW'S TOMORROW." HE PROBABLY REPRESENTS THE LEAST RISK AMONG THE THREE CANDIDATES. THE PROBLEM WITH ANDREOTTI IS THAT HE HAS TOO MUCH CONFIDENCE IN THE PCI, AND HE IS CONVINCED THAT IT IS CHANGING AND WILL CHANGE EVEN MORE. STILL AS A POLITICIAN HE IS NOT LIKELY TO CEDE ANY GROUND TO THE PCI WHICH WILL REMAIN TO HIM ESSENTIALLY AN ADVERSARY PARTY. GARDNER

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